

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments, and the following remarks. Claims 15-25 are in the application. The specification and claims 16, 20 and 25 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

The Examiner objected to the specification and claims 16 and 20 for informalities. Applicants have amended the specification and claims 15-25 accordingly. The Examiner rejected claims 15-25 under 35 USC §112 for indefiniteness. Applicants have amended claim 25 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. Applicants submit that claims 15-25 are now in compliance with 35 U.S.C. §112.

The Examiner rejected claims 15-25 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 8-90481 in view of GB 2 118 524. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants have amended claim 25 to state that the coupling means allows electric energy to be transmitted and to claim that the coupling means has channels for supplied media. These features can be seen from figures 4 to 6 and the description, on

page 5, last paragraph.

JP 8-90481 A shows an external contact detecting device being applied to a welding torch and being capable of detecting external contact against an external force of the welding torch. This differs from the switch-off box according to the present application, since it is not an independent device but rather an integration of the welding torch. The electrical connection of the contact tube of the welding torch according to JP 8-9058 1 A is done outside of the switch-off device and the welding torch. This makes it difficult to mount and demount the welding torch and further can be hindering when manipulating the robot system. Furthermore, the external electrical connections will negatively influence the response behavior of the switch-off box.

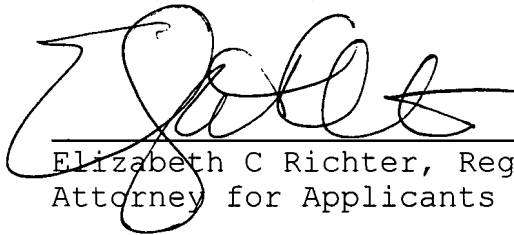
GB 2118524 A shows a similar construction to that of the aforementioned JP 8-90481 A with the same disadvantages and differences to the present invention. Combining the GB reference with the JP reference would not lead to the present invention because neither reference teaches or suggests the features of amended claim 25.

Amended claim 25 provides an independent switch-off box capable of being flexibly used at any desired site or position of

the robot system. The switch-off box according to the present invention shows a very simple construction and a very quick response behavior.

Accordingly, Applicants submits that claim 15 as amended, is patentable over the cited references, taken either singly or in combination. Claims 15-24 depend from claim 25 are therefore believed to be patentable as well. Early allowance of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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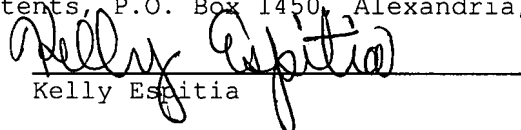
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